

**Executive Summary: Testimony of Daniel J. Carey, President, Edgewood College, before the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs – U.S. House of Representatives – June 20, 2013**

I am testifying on behalf of Edgewood College and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) regarding the value of education for veterans at private, non-profit colleges.

Veterans' Education at Edgewood College: Our fall enrollment of veterans and dependents has more than tripled in the last four years (from 43 to 144), and spring enrollment has nearly quadrupled (from 36 to 143). Providing a supportive environment is a key element of this growth. Our academic services include personalized advising to assist veterans and dependents in determining their course of study. We provide individual support services for active military students and veteran students, and we provide placement support and assistance for all veterans of the State of Wisconsin. Our cohort default rate stands at 2.5%--well below the national average of 13.4% and the proprietary school rate of 22.7%. This figure is not due to our having a wealthy student body; in fact, 35% of our undergraduate full-time students are eligible for Pell grants.

Cost of Higher Education: At its simplest level, college prices have gone up because institutions' annual costs have gone up, and because colleges are providing more services than ever. While the list of cost drivers changes somewhat from year to year, there are some expenses – such as health insurance and financial aid – that have been major cost drivers over the past decade.

Edgewood has made every effort to restrain our tuition costs—holding increases below 3.9% in each of the past three years. We participate fully in the Yellow Ribbon program, so that all tuition and fee expenses are covered for eligible GI Bill recipients. In general, private, nonprofit colleges have slowed annual tuition increases to the lowest rates seen in at least four decades.

Value of Higher Education: The real question is what students are getting from the education they receive. For me, the value is best shown by the personal stories of the veteran students I've come to know. There are many reasons why my college is a good choice for veterans, and these qualities are found at private, non-profit college campuses across the country—where personal attention, counseling services, and smaller class sizes are hallmarks of the student experience. Moreover, as a general matter, a college education has enormous value and an enormous return in terms of higher earnings, higher employment rates, increased tax revenues, lower need for income support, improved health and pension benefits, and higher job satisfaction--to name a few.

Public Law 112-249: Progress on Data Items: In response to the subcommittee's interest in progress towards implementing the 10 data items included in Public Law 112-249, I have provided detailed information regarding the current availability of the data in my full written testimony.

Principles of Excellence: Edgewood College is one of the many institutions that have voluntarily signed on to the Principles of Excellence, which are intended to assure that service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members: receive meaningful information about the financial cost and quality of education; are not subject to abusive and deceptive practices; and receive high-quality academic and student support services. Edgewood strongly supports these principles and consistently puts them into practice.